

# *Black Frog*





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# *Black Frog*

#48

September 26th, 1981

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of North America's #1 rated Diplomacy 'Zine

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BLACK FROG is a Diplomacy 'Zine that emphasizes that Postal Diplomacy is fun to play! The publisher is John H. ('Jack') Masters, 25711 N. Vista Fairways Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. (805) 259-2811. There is currently a freeze on new subscriptions to BF (see details in BF #47). Renewals of old subscriptions are \$6.00 for ten issues. There have never been any game fees in BF.

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## SUBS EXPIRED AND/OR EXPIRING

One rather unpleasant task connected with the publication of this rag is to remind subbers that their subs are expiring. Please note! This may be the only notice that you will ever get:

Subs already expired: Dan Palter, James Rawlings, Mike Hartman, Arturo Guajardo and Andy Lischett.

Subs expiring this issue: John Pack.

Subs expiring at the end of September (which will probably be with this issue): Mark Berch, John Michalski (although John's sub will be extended for 3 issues as a trade for Brutus Bulletin), Bruce Linsey, and Gail Bird.

Subs expiring with the conclusion of 1980ID (this issue): Jay Shufeldt, Keith Mercer and Bill Schiwartz.

Subs expiring with issue #49: Garry Hamlin, and J. Lanning Myers.

Subs expiring with issue #50: Roy Henricks and Tom Swider, and Richard Carlson

Subs expiring with issue #51: Clark Reynolds, and Lisa Lauver.

Subs expiring with issue #52: Gary Coughlan.

Trades expired: Vern Schaller. Trades expiring: Michael Mills. Trades terminated: Clive Tonge, Steve Shaddix.



#### BLACK FROG TO GO TO THE DOGS:

Is Black Frog the top dog?

Or, is Black Frog going to the dogs? Or, does just frog rhyme with dog?



In any case,  
watch for some startling changes in an issue coming soon!



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### THE REVELATIONS OF MR. BRUCE LINSEY:

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Bruce Linsey seems to be having a hard time accepting the fact that people in the hobby seem to enjoy humor (as is found in Black Frog) to make better reading matter than endless discussions about house rules or "tro". He seems to be particularly embittered over the fact that Black Frog ranked #1 in the recent Leeder Poll, while his Voice of Doom came in 26th.

Recently Linsey wrote me a letter and said in effect that "he no longer wanted to be my friend" and then he had all kinds of veiled threats in it. Across the top he had boldly marked "not for publication." Then last week I received issue #51 of Voice of Doom with what Bruce considers, I guess, an expose of my writing in Black Frog. He also published a similar letter recently in Brutus Bulletin. Bruce writes:

"Jack Masters' stories are not original: they are plagiarized. I don't just mean the central themes or ideas; I mean that many of the particular paragraphs are quoted from professional short story writers almost word for word. The two examples I found in the library were "The Greatest Man in the World", by James Thurber, from which Jack got the story "The Greatest Diplomacy Player in the World"; and "The Dog that Bit People", also by Thurber, from which he got the Brux versus Trouble mascot issue. And it is my understanding that several more of his stories are plagiarized as well, from at least two other authors. As far as I am concerned, any of his stories are suspect."

Well Mr. Linsey, my good friend, you are quite right the two above mentioned stories were inspired by the Thurber

stories. I have never claimed otherwise. This has been discussed several times in Black Frog and in Black Frog #35 I gave credit to the inspirational sources for some of my materials: Woody Allen, Max Shulman, James Thurber, Leonardo Da Vinci and Mel Ramos for their help in making Black Frog successful.

Thurber's "The Greatest Man in the World" was written in 1929 as a satire on the acclaim given to Charles Lindbergh after his trans-atlantic solo flight in 1927. The Thurber story was about Jackie Smurch, a fictitious entity who supposedly made a non-stop flight around the world, thus becoming a national hero. My story was about a Diplomacy player, Pug Bocarsley, who became a national hero by winning an international Diplomacy tournament in 1974. If the story is plagiarized as Linsey claims, and it isn't, so what? The Thurber copyright expired in 1947 --34 years ago!

Oh yes, there is another of my stories that was inspired by Thurber, in addition to the two cited by Linsey. "The Truth About the Great War" that appeared in BF #33 (the fake Europa Express) was very very liberally taken from Thurber's "If General Grant had been Drinking at Appomattox." In this case, Linsey's allegation of an almost "word for word" copy is pretty close to the truth. But then, I didn't claim this to be my derivation of Thurber's story--it was intended to be Gary Coughlan's.

So Linsey doesn't want to be my friend anymore. So what?

How things have changed in 18 months since Linsey's "Black Hole" scandal. Back then he very much needed me as a friend and I stuck by him. That was probably a mistake! I did resign from 1979IC (the Black Hole game) in disgust from his handling and the cover-up job he was doing, but I did keep my promise to him. Someday though!

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#### THE PUG BOCARSLY STORY

Pug Bocarsley, the Greatest Diplomacy Player that ever Lived, was my story inspired by James Thurber's "The Greatest Man that ever Lived". It appeared in Black Frog #21 on November 6th, 1980. It is being reprinted on the following four pages. Probably 50% of BF subbers are new since then. Compare it to the James Thurber story in your library. If you don't enjoy reading this--you can sub to Voice of Doom.

A very very special Black Frog feature  
.....the true story of:

PUG BOCARSLLEY

The Greatest Diplomacy Player  
That Ever Lived

"National Hero" brings to mind the likes of a John Glenn, or Jim Thorpe, or Charles Lindbergh, or Mark Spitz. These were heroes who wore their laurels gracefully and withstood the awful weather of acclaim and publicity with dignity and honor. It was perhaps inevitable that there would emerge someday a national hero of insufficient intelligence, background and character to successfully endure the mounting fame and glory that his accomplishments entitled him to. Witness the short and fantastic career of Pug Bocarsley, National Hero and certainly the greatest Diplomacy player that ever lived.

Let's go back to the beginning on October 29th, 1974 in Zurich, Switzerland. This was the day before the opening of Diplolympics I--the first International DiploCon in which teams of four players each from 49 competing countries would compete for the International Diplomacy Championship. The event was well publicized and would create a great deal of interest in the United States as well as around the world. United States President Gerald Ford was counting on the event to produce an American champion. Somebody that the American people could identify with and build a new sense of national pride around. He was also hopeful that this news event would take the continuing Watergate revelations off of the front page of the nations newspapers.

The U.S. hopes were seemingly dashed when the TWA jet that was carrying the U.S. team from Washington to Zurich was highjacked to Cuba. Fidel Castro, never one to miss an opportunity to antagonize the U.S., decided to impound the airliner and all its passengers until the conclusion of Diplolympics.

Pug Bocarsley walked into the U.S. embassy (and to this day nobody knows why or how he happened to be in Zurich at the time) and volunteered to stand in for the American team. At the time Pug came in, the entire embassy staff was fervently playing Diplomacy in an attempt to get their four best players together to represent the U.S. in the big event. When Pug seemed to be as good as anybody else in the session, he was placed on the makeshift team.

October 30th, 1974. Armed with three interpreters (all participants in Diplolympics were allowed three interpreters), a quart of gin and two pounds of salami, Pug entered the first day of play. A reporter caught him on the way in and asked, "Do you really think you have a chance against the best players in the World?" "Hell yes", said Pug, "Nobody ain't ever seen no playin' yet." The newspapers that day all carried this comment, but only touched briefly and satirically about the very dim American prospects in DO-I.

Pug didn't exactly set the world on fire in the first three rounds of play on day-1, but he did finish the day ranked 56 in the overall standings and was the only one of the four Americans to make the 98 player semi-final cut.

DO-I and Pug Bocarsley were suddenly blown into a front page story in American newspapers. The accounts all dealt with DO-I, the freak circumstances that brought Bocarsley into it and the play itself. They only touched briefly upon Bocarsley himself because very little was known about him. But Pug was quickly becoming a public hero and the public was demanding to know more about him. The newspapers all rushed reporters to his home town of Paragould, Arkansas to get his story.

October 31st, 1974. Another three rounds of play in day-2 of DO-I. Pug seemed to be getting the hang of things. He advanced his overall standing to 9th place and turned in (round 5) the best Turkish performance of the entire Con.

DO-I was again first page news, but the accounts touched rather lightly upon Pug himself once again, but this time it was not because facts about him were too meagre, but rather because they were too complete.

Reporters, who had been rushed to Arkansas to dig up the story of the great man's life, had promptly discovered that the story of his life could not be printed. His mother had been located in Memphis, working as a mail-handler on the third shift for the post office. She, however, met all inquiries as to her son with an angry "Ah, the hell with him; I hope they kill him." His father appeared to be in jail somewhere for stealing money-order blanks from post offices in Sikeston, Missouri; Blythe, Arkansas and Metarie, Louisiana. His brother had but recently escaped from the Osceola, Arkansas Reformatory and was already wanted in Memphis for breaking into a Loeb's Barbecue and

throwing cole slaw all over the place after he found the cash box empty. These stories were piling up at the very time that Pug Bocarsley was just coming into the public eye as possibly the greatest American hero of 1974.

November 1st, 1974. Rounds 7 through 9 of DO-I. Not only did Pug reach the finals, but he advanced his overall standing to 1st place. The most improbable player of the entire tournament could very well win the whole thing!

This had really become big headline stuff in the American newspapers. Watergate and other things (such as the release of a TWA jet and the original American team in Havana) were pushed well back in the news. The necessity for printing some account in the papers of the young man's career and personality had led to a remarkable predicament. It was of course impossible to reveal the facts, for a tremendous popular feeling in favor of the young hero had sprung up, like wild fire. He was, therefore, described as a modest chap, taciturn, blond, popular with his friends and popular with girls. The only available snapshot of Pug, taken at the wheel of a phoney automobile in a cheap photo studio at a Little Rock amusement park, was touched up so that the little vulgarian looked quite handsome. His twisted leer was smoothed into a pleasant smile. The truth was, in this way, kept from the youth's ecstatic compatriots; they did not dream that the Bocarsley family was despised and feared by its neighbors in an obscure Arkansas town, nor that the hero himself, because of numerous unsavory exploits, had come to be regarded in Paragould as a nuisance and a menace. He had, the reporters discovered, once knifed the principal of his high school--not mortally, to be sure, but he had knifed him; and on another occasion, surprised in the act of stealing an altarcloth from a church, he had bashed the sacristan over the head with a pot of Easter lilies; for each of these offences he had served a stint in the reformatory.

Gerald Ford and his cabinet, Arkansas Governor Dale Bumper, and higher officials at Avalon Hill Games, Inc., were all secretly praying that Pug's demise would come in the final rounds of play and he would not win. Although, ostensibly they all stood to gain from any acclaim brought on Pug, they were privy to the background information regarding him and were convinced that his character was such that the limelight of adulation was bound to reveal him to all the world as a congenital hooligan mentally and morally unequipped to cope with his own prodigious fame.

November 2nd, 1974. President Ford called a secret cabinet meeting to consider the national dilemma. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is reported to have said, "I trust that his mother's prayer will be answered," by which he referred to Mrs. Emma Bocarsley's wish that somehow her son might be killed. It was too late for that, Zurich time is well ahead of Washington time and Pug Bocarsley had already won!

The team victory went to France, who had three of her four players finish in the top 20 spots. But the top spot and individual championship went to Pug Bocarsley. Not only did Pug win by a comfortable margin but he also took three trophies for the best performance in play of Turkey, Germany and England. A truly fantastic performance.

November 3rd, 1974. TWA flight #334 brought Pug Bocarsley into J.F. Kennedy airport in New York. It had, of course, been out of the question to arrange a modest little reception for the greatest Diplomacy player of all history. Thousands turned out for the elaborate and pretentious ceremonies planned for him. Included among the many dignitaries were President Ford, Secretary of State Kissinger, New York Governor Malcolm Wilson, New Jersey Governor Brendan Byrne, Arkansas Senators John McClellan and J.W. Fulbright, Allen Calhamer and John Boardman. However, on the flight home, Pug had consumed an entire half gallon of gin. After landing, he tumbled down the gangway--dead drunk. Without having opened his mouth once, he was loaded into an ambulance and quickly spirited away to a nursing home. The public was simply informed that Pug was completely exhausted from his four day ordeal of solid Diplomacy play. The public bought this story and thus Pug's drunkenness was very fortunate and he was unable to jeopardize the dignity of his first reception by talking to anyone.

November 4th, 1974. Pug Bocarsley was kept in bed and was kept quiet. He was not allowed to see any visitors. Another fortunate aspect--he missed the big hullabaloo held for him at City Hall. Meantime some of the greatest minds in the country had assembled in a secret conference to plan a seminar which Pug was to attend for the purpose of being instructed in the ethics and behavior of heroism.

November 5th, 1974. On his second day in the rest home, Pug was finally allowed to get up and dress and to chew tobacco. He was permitted to receive the newspapermen--this by way of testing him out. Pug did not wait

for questions. "Youse guys," he said--and the AP man winced--"youse guys can tell the whole damn world that I put it over on em all, see? Yeh--an' made asses out o' them two friggin frogs." The "two frogs" was a reference to a pair of gallant French players who, in attempting to prevent a Bocarsley win in round 11--a very critical round--had failed to hold a stalemate line against Pug. The AP man was bold enough, at this point, to sketch out for Pug the accepted formula for interviews in cases of this kind; he explained that there should be no arrogant statements belittling the achievements of the losers, particular the heroes of foreign nations. "Ah, the hell with that shit," said Pug, "I did it see? I won it, and I'm talkin' about it." And he did talk about it.

None of this extraordinary interview was, of course, printed. On the contrary, the newspapers, already under the disciplined direction of a secret directorate created for the occasion and composed of statesmen and editors, gave out to a panting and restless world that "Pugsy," as he had been arbitrarily nicknamed, would consent to say only that he was very happy and that anybody could have done what he did. "My achievement has been, I fear, slightly exaggerated," the Associated Press' article had him protest, with a modest smile. These newspaper stories were kept from the hero, a restriction which did not serve to abate the rising malevolence of his temer. Pug Bocarsley was, as he kept insisting, "rarin' to go." He could not be kept much longer in a rest home. It was the most desperate crisis that Gerald Ford had faced in his brief two month presidency since Nixon had stepped down.

November 6th, 1974. On the afternoon of his third day in the rest home, Pug was taken to a conference room in which were gathered a group of government officials, psychologists and editors. He gave each of them a limp, moist paw and a brief unlovely grin. "Hah ya?" he said. When Pug was seated, White House Press Secretary Jerald terHorst arose and, with obvious pessimism, attempted to explain what Pug must say and how Pug must act when presented to the world. TerHorst ended his talk with a high tribute to Pug's courage and integrity and then introduced Cameron Dunlap, Second Secretary of the American Embassy to the United Nations, the gentleman who had been selected to coach Bocarsley in the amenities of public ceremonies. Sitting in a chair, unshaven, wearing a soiled yellow t-shirt bearing a profane epithet, and chewing on a plug of tobacco, Pug Bocarsley listened with a leer on his lips. "I get ya, get ya," he cut in nastily. "Ya want me to ack like a softy, huh? Ya want me to ack like that

baby-faced Mark Spitz, huh? Well ball shit and nuts to that, see?" Everyone took in his breath sharply and there was a long pause. "Mr. Spitz," began a newspaper editor, purple with rage, "was somebody who was humble and we were all proud...." "Aw for Christ's sake," Pug, who was paring his nails with a jackknife, cut in. "Don't waste my time with all this friggin' crap cause--" Somebody shut off his blasphemies with a sharp word. A newcomer had entered the room. Everyone, except Pug who was still busy with his nails, stood up. "Mr. Bocarsley," said Jerald terHorst, very sternly, "the President of the United States!" It had been thought that the presence of the Chief Executive might have a chastening effect upon the young hero, and the former had been, thanks to the remarkable cooperation of the press, secretly brought to the obscure conference room.

A great painful silence fell. Pug looked up, waved a hand at the President. "How ya comin', Nixon?" he asked, and spit a massive plug of tobacco on the floor. The silence deepened. Several people coughed very uncomfortably. "Geez, it's hot, ain't it?" said Pug. He pulled off his t-shirt, revealing a hairy chest and the tattooed word "Kathy" enclosed in a stencilled heart. The great and important men in the room, faced by the most serious crisis in recent American history, exchanged worried frowns.

TerHorst finally spoke, "The President's name is Gerald Ford," he said. Pug, looking mildly surprised, glanced up. "Ah'l be damned," he said, "Ah'm sure that Ah never voted for you." "Yes, I am sure you didn't," answered a very surprised President Ford, as he extended his hand to Pug. Pug got half-way up out of his chair and took the President's hand. There was another long and awkward silence as nobody seemed to know how to proceed.

"Come awn, come awn," said Pug. "Let's get the hell out of here! When do I start cuttin' in on de parties, huh? And what's they goin' to be in it for me?" He rubbed a thumb and forefinger together meaningfully. "Money!" exclaimed Dunlap, shocked pale. "Yeh, money," said Pug, walking over a spitting a plug of tobacco out the window. "An' big money." He reached in his pocket for fresh tobacco. "Big money," he repeated and leered at the gentlemen in the room with him. His leer was the leer of an animal that knows its power, the leer of a leopard loose in a bird store. "Aw fa God's sake, let's get some place where it's cooler, I been cooped up here for three days."

Pug stood up and walked over to the open window, where he stood staring down into the street, six floors below. The faint shouting of newsboys floated up to him. He made out his own name. "Hot dog!" he cried, ecstatic. He leaned out over the sill. "You tell 'em babies!" he shouted down. "Hot diggity dog, Pug Bocarsley has arrived!" In the tense little knot of men standing behind him, a quick, mad impulse flared up. An unspoken word of appeal, of command, seemed to ring through the room. Yet it was deadly silent. Bert K. Murch, secretary to the Major of New York City, happened to be standing nearest to Bocarsley; he looked inquiringly at the President of the United States. The President nodded. Murch, a tall, powerfully built man, once a line-backer at Slippery Rock, stepped forward, seized the world's greatest Diplomacy player by his left shoulder and the seat of his pants, and pushed him out the window.

"My God, he's fallen out the window!" cried the quick-witted Jerald terHorst.

"Get me out of here!" cried the President. Several men sprang to his side and he was hurriedly escorted out of a door toward a side-entrance to the building. CBS newsmen, Dan Rather, took charge, being used to such things. Crisply he ordered certain men to leave, others to stay; quickly he outlined a story which all the papers and newservices were to agree on, sent two men to the street to handle that end of the tragedy, commanded one man to cry out loud and two others to go to pieces nervously. In a word, he skillfully set the stage for the gigantic task that was to follow, the task of breaking the news of the sad and untimely death of a spectacular and illustrious figure to a grief-stricken world.

November 9th, 1974. The funeral was, as you know, one of the most elaborate and saddest ever held in the United States of America. The monument in Arlington Cemetery, with its clean white shaft of marble, is still a place for pilgrims to visit. The nations of the world paid lofty tributes to little Pug Bocarsley, America's greatest hero of 1974. At a given hour there were two minutes of silence throughout the nation. Even the inhabitants of the small, bewildered town of Paragould, Arkansas, observed this touching ceremony; agents of the Department of Justice saw to that. In Memphis, Tennessee, one of them was especially assigned to stand grimly by the conveyors in the Federal mail-handling facility. There, under his stern scrutiny, Mrs. Emma Bocarsley bowed her

above two mail sacks on her conveyor belt--bowed her head and turned away, so that the Secret Service man could not see the twisted, strangely familiar, leer on her lips.

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October 29th, 1980. It is just about six years to the very day since Pug Bocarsley became the World's Greatest Diplomacy Player. The Diplomacy hobby hit it's zenith in the United States in 1974. Of course it still exists today and, in its own way, is still thriving--but things are different. The United States has not fielded an official national team since 1974; we did not compete in Diplolympics II in Helsinki in 1978 and it certainly appears that we will not compete in D-O III in Istanbul in 1982, just as we did not compete in the summer Olympics in Moscow in 1980.

Avalon Hill, Incorporated still does, of course, publish and distribute the game in the United States, but in an attempt to replace it in the public eye, they have come out with a succession of other games; Origins of WWII, Kingmaker, Dune, etc., the list goes on and on. They have even taken this a step further, trying to discourage the play of the game by producing the French and Italian playing pieces so close to the same color that they are almost impossible to tell apart.

Even the United States Post Office Department has gotten into the act and, in an attempt to discourage postal Diplomacy, has twice raised the first class postage rate since 1974.

But still we carry on and always will. Our postal games are no longer carried in the big four-color offset glossy zines of six years ago and are instead relegated to small, semi-underground, mimeo or xerox produced zines, such as the Black Frog you are now holding in your hand.

Yes, gentlemen we are Diplomacy players and proud of it and we will come back to the big time. And, let's all honor and love Pug Bocarsley, the greatest of us all. Yes, although Presidents, Governors and Senators may have been embarrassed by Pug's true nature and character--we are not, for we understand him and are proud of him. Yes, we are all fully aware of what type of person it takes to play this damn game--let alone win at it--and Pug Bocarsley was the very best. He was our kind of guy!

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LETTER EQUATIONS ONCE AGAIN: THIS TIME WITH A PRIZE!

When I put the series of letter equations in Black Frog #44 (the answers appeared in Black Frog #47) I indicated that more would appear later.

Here is the first of them. Anybody who can get the correct answers for all of these back to me by November 1st, 1981 will receive a free subscription to Sleepless Knights and the chance to compete in a special play-off for a \$25 U.S. savings bond. Here goes:

- ( 1.) 7 = G.P. in D.      "Great Powers in Diplomacy"
- ( 2.) 1 = C.P. for a W. \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 3.) 34 = D on a D.B. \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 4.) 18 = S.C. for a W. \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 5.) 34 = D on a D.B. \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 6.) 12 = N.S.C. \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 7.) 48 = I. of B.F. \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 8.) 4 = M.F.Y.B. (for R.) \_\_\_\_\_
- ( 9.) 112 = W.B. in a D.S. \_\_\_\_\_
- (10.) 1901 = Y. the G.S. \_\_\_\_\_
- (11.) 91355 = Z.C. for V.N.C. \_\_\_\_\_
- (12.) 19 = S.S. on a D.B. \_\_\_\_\_

(13.) 35 = C. to M. a Z. (0.0.0.) \_\_\_\_\_

(14.) 20 = S.S. on a D.B. (including C.S.) \_\_\_\_\_

(15.) 18 = C. to M. a L. \_\_\_\_\_

The fifteen equations above relate, more-or-less, to postal Diplomacy. The five below relate to hobby personalities.

(16.) 21 = B.J. \_\_\_\_\_

(17.) 37 = M.L's I.Q. \_\_\_\_\_

(18.) 101 = S. by K.B. \_\_\_\_\_

(19.) 201 = N.M.R. by D.P. \_\_\_\_\_

(20.) 301 = L. by A.P. \_\_\_\_\_

There they are. Have a go at them. Even if you don't get them all; send in what you can get. They are not too hard. If you are new to the hobby, you may have a bit of difficulty with the last five. If so, write "novice" on your answers and the last five won't count against you.

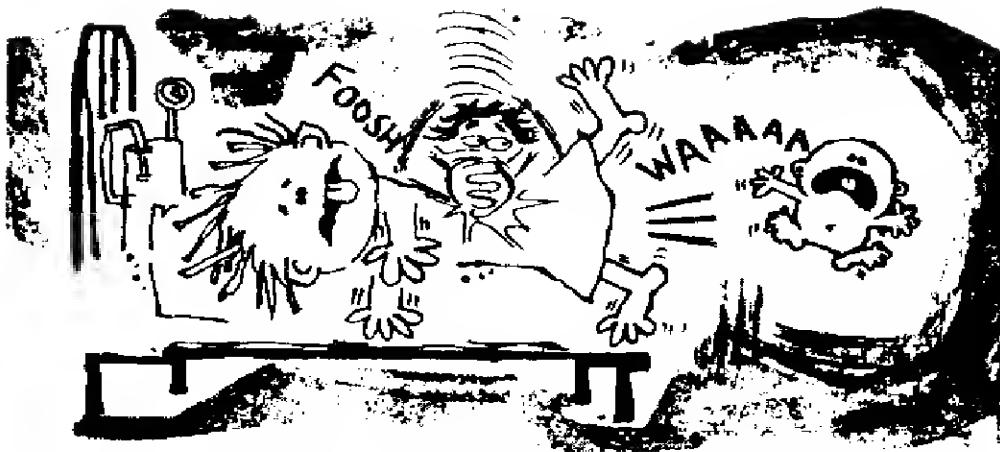
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NEWS OF OTHER 'ZINES: BRUTUS BULLETIN TO SHUT DOWN:

Just after I praised John Michalski for hitting 100 issues of Brutus Bulletin (B.F. #47), B.B. #103 comes out with the announcement that BB will shut down after issue #104, which is due any minute.

Brutus Bulletin will be missed and I am sorry to see it go, but after 104 issues and four years, John is certainly entitled to a rest. John writes that this was decided on for over a year, due mainly to family pressures and that his decision (to shut down) is irrevocable and not subject to discussion. Games in BB were all in subzines and presumably will not be affected by the shut down.

Sorry to see BB go, John, but <sup>1</sup> hope that you remain active in the hobby.



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#### LEEDER POLL GAMEMASTER RESULTS:

These results were reported in East of Eden #15, so this will be repetitious . The top 20 rated GM's from among those who received five or more mentions, the GM's rating follows his name:

1. John Daly	9.15	11. John Boardman	8.33
2. Ron Brown (MM)	8.90	12. Lee Kendter, Sr.	8.20
3. Gary Coughlan	8.86	13. Dave Marshall	8.17
4. Bob Sergeant	8.61	14. Glenn Overby	8.14
5. Don Ditter	8.60	15. Al Pearson	8.13
6. Andy Lischett	8.55	16. Bob Osuch	8.11
7. John Michalski	8.55	17. Jack Masters	8.00
8. Randolph Smyth	8.50	18. Bob Arnett	7.94
9. Fred Davis	8.40	19. Jim Bumpas	7.88
10. John Caruso	8.38	20. Drew McGee	7.80

Gary Coughlan is a little embarrassed by his ranking, since at the time of the vote he hadn't GM'd one complete season in one game yet. The rest of the top dozen names here are GM's with a great deal (over two years) of GMing experience. Experience, or maybe it is longevity, seems to be a factor in these ratings.

Forty-seven GM's were listed in the main list (getting 5 votes or more) and 32 of them received a rating of 7 or greater. It is my feeling that you can expect a pretty good game with any GM who gets a rating of 7 or better. A rating between 6 and 7 may indicate a problem or two, but probably nothing serious. Don Horton (6.50) and Al Rodriguez (6.40) are in this group possibly because they quit during the year, but both phased out in a responsible manner (Horton completed his games and Rodriguez turned his over to Allen Wells). Those that simply dropped out

sight without a word (e.g. Brad Wilson, 2.22) got worse.

Less than a six, and real problems are indicated. There were only seven of these on the main list:

41.	Jerry Jones	5.67
42.	Bruce Linsey	5.67
43.	Jack Frost	5.33
44.	Scott Hanson	5.17
45.	Bruce Schneier	4.60
46.	Richard Kovalcik	2.25
47.	Brad Wilson	2.22

It is undoubtedly a good idea to avoid these. Kovalcik is simply rotten. Linsey received 30 votes to get his low rating. Some people seem to enjoy playing games under him, but he has left a rotten taste in many mouths. Some others received very low ratings, but less than five mentions, they include: Bob Albrecht 1.0; Wade Dudley 3.0; Phil Fry 3.5; Tom Gould 1.0; John Kelley 3.0; Bill LaFosse 1.0; John Lipscomb 3.33; Robert Loewenstein 2.0; Mike Matuschak 1.0; Bernie Oaklyn 1.5; Eric Ozog 3.67; Dan Palter 2.5; Rick Shatto 1.0; Clive Tonge 3.67; and Jack Tyler 0.00.

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Well just enough room for,  
THE MIKE CONNER DEPARTMENT:

